been prepared for Visakhapatnam-Kakinada to be developed as an industrial corridor; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (f) Ministry of Industry have no plans to develop Visakhapatnam-Kakinada as Industrial Corridor or an Industrial Park at Pravada.

[Translation]

Regional and Technical Development Centre

670. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be plesed to state:

(a) whether the Regional and Technical Development Centre has been set up in Bhopal where women victims of Bhopal gas tragedy have also been taking the benefit of training imparted by the Centre and new designs and techniques are being developed by them;

(b) whether any proposal to shift this centre from Bhopal to elsewhere is under consideration of the Government; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) The Regional Design and Technical Development Centre at Bhopal is engaged in developing new designs and techniques and it dissemination amongst artisans, including the women victims of Bhopal gas tragedy.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Trade Deficit

671. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total trade deficit during 1996-97;

(b) to what extent it was more in comparison with the previous year 1995-96 with reasons therefor;

(c) whether any concrete measures in this regard have been worked out for improving the trade deficit during 1997-98; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) As per DGCI&S data, the trade deficit in 1996-97 was US $ 5442 million as against US $ 4881 million in 1995-96. While import growth also decelerated in 1996-97 the deceleration was faster for exports. This asymmetry in growth rates, together with a higher base for imports resulted in a widening of the trade deficit by US $ 561 million in 1996-97. The deceleration in the rate of growth of exports was partly due to an overall decline in the growth of world trade and some sector specific reasons.

(c) and (d) The key to reducing trade deficit lies in accelerated export growth. Export promotion measures are continuously being taken by the Government through policy and promotional schemes. These include simplification of Export Import Policy procedures, improving efficiency and competitiveness, focussing on quality and technology upgradation, efforts to actively involve the State Governments in export promotion. Export promotion is a continuing activity based on interaction with industry, trade and other export promotional institutions.

Growth Rate

672. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether RBI has projected 6.8% growth rate in GDP for the year 1996-97;

(b) if so, whether this rate is lower than the previous year;

(c) if so, the reasons for lower percentage of growth rate in GDP during 1996-97;

(d) whether RBI has also expressed concern over show down in industrial growth, high interest rates; and decline in export growth; and

(e) if so, the measures being taken by the Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) makes the projections for growth rate in GDP. However, Reserve Bank of India in its Monetary & Credit Policy announcemnt for first half 1997-98 has indicated that real GDP is expected to have grown by 6.8% in 1996-97. This is consistent with the revised estimate of GDP for the year 1996-97 released by the CSO in July 1997. The growth rate of GDP for 1996-97 is marginally lower than that of 7.1 per cent registered in 1995-96. The sectoral break-down of the growth rates in 1995-96 and 1996-97 is indicated in the attached statement.

(d) and (e) The Reserve Bank of India in its Monetary and Credit Policy for the first half of 1997-98, has mentioned about slowing down of industrial growth in the economy. As regards the interest rate structure, the policy has noted a general lowering down of rates of interest on different money market instruments. The Reserve Bank of India has also announced reduction in the bank rate. The Policy has also observed a strong need for improving exports and ensuring imports to sustain growth momentum. The Government has announced several measures in the Budget 1997-98 to boost production and exports and to improve the growth rate of GDP. These measures include reduction and rationalisation of income tax, corporate tax, excise and customs duties.

Statement

Growth rates of GDP at factor cost by kind of economic activity for the years 1995-96 and 1996-97 at 1980-81 prices

(In per cent)

	Industry	1995-96*	1996-97**
1.	Agriculture, forestry & fishing	–0.1	5.7
2.	Mining & quarrying	7.0	1.0
3.	Manufacturing	13.6	8.1
4.	Electricity, gas & water supply	9.1	3.8
5.	Construction	5.3	5.5
6.	Trade, hotels, transport and communications	13.3	8.7
7.	Financing, insurance, real estate & business services	4.0	6.9
8.	Community, social & personal services	6.2	5.3
	Total GDP at factor cost	7.1	6.8

*Quick estimates

**Revised (July 1997 update) estimates.

[Translation]

Instrumentation Ltd., Kota

673. VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the officers of Instrumentation Ltd., Kota have visited foreign countries for obtaining orders;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the countries visited by them during the last three years and the number of orders obtained by them during the visits; and

(c) the total amount spent on such foreign visits?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. In last three years no officer of Instrumentation Ltd. has visited abroad for obtaining orders. However, their officers have visited for commissioning/execution of systems supplied against export orders as well as for detailed engineering, software development, Design finalisation, discussions on technical collboration agreements and training at their foreign collaborators works in Germany, Japan, USA and Ukraine etc.

Investment in Coal Sector

674. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the major works carried out on contract basis and payment made for execution of these work by the Coal India Ltd. during the last three years, Subsidiary-wise;

(b) the details of payment received by top five contracting firms for the work done for CIL during each of the last three years, company-wise;

(c) whether in view of revised production strategies of cutting costs in liberalisation era, the Government are considering to entrust more and more work on new mines to contractors to ensure better returns on investment and be competitive by cutting heavy establishment charges and consequent liabilities of deploying departmental manpower; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the policy of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

12.01 hrs.

[English]

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Notification under Sub-section (2) of Section 3 of the Jute Packaging Material Act, 1987

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Notification No. S.O.284(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 31st March, 1997 making certain amendments in the Order published in Notification No.S.O.905(E) dated the 31st December, 1996 under subsection (2) of section 3 of the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2177/97]

Annual Report, Audited Accounts and Review of the Government of the working of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, New Delhi for the year 1995-96

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English